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REDDISH

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Medical Officer's

Report

❧ **FOR THE YEAR 1894.** ❧

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Reddish Urban Sanitary District.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year ended December 31st, 1894.

To the Chairman and Councillors of the Reddish Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of submitting to you my Tenth Annual Report on the health and sanitary condition of your District, together with the Tables required by the Local Government Board.

District.—The District of Reddish comprises a portion of South Lancashire 1541 acres in extent. The greater portion is fairly level, descending on its eastern border into the valley of the Tame. The higher ground has an average elevation of 260 feet and the lower of 160 feet above sea level. The subsoil is glacial drift, consisting largely of clay at the higher levels, and of sand alternating with gravel and clay in other portions.

Previous to the election of an Urban District Council in December last a census of the District was taken, as follows :

	Area—Acres.		Houses.		Occupied.		Unoccupied.		Population.
NORTH WARD.....	786	...	801	...	772	...	29	...	3599
SOUTH WARD	755	...	832	...	728	...	104	...	3501
	<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>
	1541		1633		1500		133		7100

As nine more houses were in occupation in 1894 than in 1893, the population would appear to be more accurately 7140. For the purposes of this report I take the lower estimate.

Deaths.—The number of deaths registered was 120—61 males and 59 females. There were 216 births—100 males and 116 females.

Inquests.—Inquests were held in nine cases, and verdicts returned as follow:—Burns, 1; Accident, 1; Overdose of Cordial containing Morphia, 1; Found Dead, 1; Alcoholic Poisoning, 1; Drowning (Suicidal), 1; Drowning, 1; Natural Causes, 2.

Uncertified Deaths.—In two deaths from cancer no medical certificate was forthcoming.

The following Table gives the causes and number of deaths compared with 1893:—

TABLE I.

Causes of Deaths.	1893		1894.	
	Under 5 yrs.	Five & over.	Under 5 yrs.	Five & over.
Influenza .....	...	...	..	1
Croup .....	...	...	...	..
Diphtheria.....	4	1	...	...
Scarlet Fever	1	3	1	...
Typhoid and Continued Fever .....	...	2	1	3
Whooping Cough .....	...	...	4	...
Measles .....	...	...	8	...
Diarrhœa, &c.	8	1	9	1
Puerperal Fever .....	...	...	...	3
Rheumatic Fever .....	...	1	...	1
Phthisis .....	...	11	1	9
Bronchitis, Pneumonia, &c.....	13	7	9	12
Heart Disease .....	...	6	...	3
All other Causes	25	39	26	28

Table II. gives the respective rates for the last three years.

TABLE II.

Year.	Birth R.	Death R.	Zymotic.	Phthisis.	Respiratory.	Infantile.
1892	32'5	16'5	1'57	1'14	3'57	153
1893	31'69	17'18	2'81	1'54	2'81	151'6
1894	30'42	16'9	3'8	1'4	2'95	152'7

Zymotic Rate.—This rate is estimated on the number of deaths resulting from the seven chief zymotic diseases, which are:—Smallpox, Measles, Scarlatina, Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, Fever (Typhus, Typhoid, and other doubtful forms of continued fever), and Diarrhœa. As will be seen from Table II., there is an increase of 1 per 1000 in this rate, due to the fatalities during the epidemic of Measles.

Scarlet Fever.—In *January* eleven cases came under notice within a radius of 150 yards of Barlow Lane End. There were no deaths. *Also two cases in North Reddish J.H.L.*

February.—One case in Schofield Street.

March.—Two cases; one Beau Repaire Terrace, and one (fatal) Furnival Street.

September.—Two cases in North Reddish (Wellington Terrace and Gorton Road), and one in South Reddish (Hill Street).

October.—One case in North Reddish (off Gorton Road).

Diphtheria.—In *December*, two cases of membranous throat disease occurred in Railway Avenue, North Reddish. Taking advantage of the arrangements made by the Local Government Board, I forwarded a sample of the membrane to their Medical Officer, and he, after cultural examination, pronounced the disease to be Diphtheria. The house was in an insanitary condition, but owing to the steps taken there was no extension of the disease.

Typhoid Fever.—*January.*—One case, Broadstone Road, old house, defective drain.

May.—Three cases in one house in Manchester Old Road, ashpit leaky and offensive, and yard unpaved.

August.—Two cases in Ann Street, South Reddish (one fatal), drains blocked and back premises flooded. One case in Gorton Road, North Reddish, no sanitary defects.

September.—Three cases in South Reddish—Frances Street, Ann Street, and Norton Street.

November.—Two cases in South Reddish—Frances Street and Walmsley Terrace (latter fatal)—sanitary defects in ash-pits and slopstone pipes.

December.—One fatal case in Ann Street, drains defective.

From August to the end of the year, we have had a constant series of cases in South Reddish, of which those reported probably constitute a minority. The unhealthy condition of the streets and premises in Newtown (South Reddish), has been frequently commented on. It is to be hoped that a speedy improvement will be made through the action of the Sanitary Authority.

Continued Fever.—One death (child) occurred during July in Barlow Lane.

Measles.—This epidemic commenced in North Reddish in July. During July and August I have notes of twenty cases. In September and October the disease became very prevalent in Reddish Green and Reddish Vale. Eight deaths were recorded, all on Reddish Green, and all in children under school age. The Principals of the Schools (Houldsworth and St. Joseph's) kindly gave me every assistance in dealing with the epidemic. By my advice, notice was given in the schools that all children from infected houses should remain at home, and a list of cases was forwarded to me. It did not seem advisable to recommend the closing of schools, as I am of opinion that there is less control over children playing in the streets than attending school. 106 children absented themselves from the Houldsworth School, and 12 from St. Joseph's School, suffering from Measles, and 149 other children were detained from school in infected houses. In addition, there must have been nearly an equal number of children not of school age affected. So far as possible, steps were taken to limit the extension of the disease, and the epidemic came to an end in October.

Influenza was epidemic to a slight extent in Spring, and caused one death in Victoria Terrace (South Reddish).

Whooping Cough.—Four deaths have resulted from this disease during the year. In November, an epidemic (which still continues) sprang up and extended to all parts of the district. Unfortunately, the contagious and often serious nature of this complaint is ignored by the people generally, and one constantly sees and hears children exposed in public places, to the detriment of themselves and others.

Diarrhœa became epidemic in the latter half of August, the fatalities being chiefly among infants. An acute case of “English Cholera” in an adult terminated fatally in John Edward Street, after 24 hours’ illness. Every precaution was taken in disinfecting, &c., to prevent its extension.

Infantile Mortality presents this year no special features. The rate is fairly uniform with that of previous years. The chief causes of death in infants under six months are diarrhœa and inanition, indicating improper feeding and insanitary surroundings, or a low vitality at birth. Four deaths were recorded as following premature birth.

Sanitary Work.—Your Inspector, Mr. Ludlow, furnishes the following Report of Sanitary Work done during the year :—

Notices served as to dangerous condition of walls and cornices, 14.

Notices of defective gutters, 9.

Ashpits repaired and altered so as to abate nuisance, 149 houses.

Drains and gullies altered and made good, so as to abate nuisance, 37.

Hens and pigeons kept in houses, 4 cases.

Large quantity of offensive matter deposited so as to create a nuisance, 1 case.

Seven plans of 40 houses approved.

Six plans of alterations to existing buildings, and of buildings—not houses—approved.

Houses disinfected after infectious disease, 15.

As all notices were complied with, and nuisance abated, no legal action was required in any case.

(Signed) JOHN LUDLOW.

Sewers and Drains.—Considerable activity has been shewn in carrying out sewage improvements. The main

sewer and surface drains for North Reddish have been laid down, and connections with house drains are being made. Untrapped grids still exist in some of the streets of Mid-Reddish. These should be replaced by efficient traps.

Scavenging and Privy Accommodation.—The scavenging is carried out by the Authority, and is fairly efficient. It would be an improvement if ashpits in all parts of the district could be emptied at night. The closet accommodation is chiefly of the combined privy and ashpit type, of which even the best examples are a source of nuisance. On the completion of the Sewage Works, I should like to see a form of water closets adopted in all new property, and gradually introduced in old property as occasion served.

Roads.—Although some of the main roads are in bad condition, owing to the necessary disturbance during the laying down of sewers, they are well kept as a whole. During the late severe weather commendable activity was shewn in removing snow and keeping the roads in a condition for traffic.

Water Supply.—There is a plentiful water supply, which is usually of good quality, but in October numerous complaints were made of the presence in it of organic vegetable matter.

Bakehouses and Slaughterhouses are regularly inspected and are generally kept in good order.

Dairies and Cowsheds.—Regulations have been drawn up and are now in force for these buildings.

Factories and Workshops.—The inspection of these has commenced. No report has so far been issued.

Smoke.—Complaints have been made as to the nuisance resulting from smoke, but no observations have been made, and no time limit for dense smoke fixed.

As indicating the lines on which Improvements may be made in future, I would suggest the provision of means for remedying the sanitary defects mentioned in this Report.

T. HANSON SMITH,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

February 25th, 1895.

